

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 4724

---

## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

---

Recommended by the committee on Labor and Workforce Development, as a substitute for a recommitted bill with the same title (House, No. 4624). June 3, 2010.

---

FOR THE COMMITTEE:

NAME:

Cheryl A. Coakley-Rivera

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

10th Hampden

# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand and Ten

An Act improving coordination of the youth workforce development system in the commonwealth.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1           SECTION 1. A Youth Solutions Commission shall be established to identify youth  
2 workforce best practices and programs nationwide and to evaluate programs currently supported  
3 by the commonwealth.  
4 The commission shall consist of 30 members 1 of whom shall be the secretary of labor and  
5 workforce development, or his designee, who shall serve as chair; 1 of whom shall be the  
6 secretary of education, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of elementary and  
7 secondary education, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of higher education,  
8 or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of social services, or his designee; 1 of  
9 whom shall be the commissioner of youth services, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the  
10 commissioner of transitional assistance, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of  
11 mental health, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the president of the Commonwealth  
12 Corporation, or his designee; 1 of whom shall be the commissioner of public health, or his  
13 designee; 1 of whom shall be the chair of the house committee on ways and means, or his  
14 designee; 1 of whom shall be the chair of the senate committee on ways and means, or his  
15 designee; 2 of whom shall be the chairs of the joint committee on education, or their designees; 1  
16 of whom shall be a member to be appointed by the speaker of the house; 1 of whom shall be  
17 appointed by the senate president; 1 of whom shall be appointed by the minority leader of the  
18 house; 1 of whom shall be appointed by the minority leader of the senate; and 12 of whom shall

be appointed by the secretary of labor and workforce development, 2 of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Workforce Board Association; 1 of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Workforce Professionals Association; 1 of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents; 1 of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts Community Action Network; 1 of whom shall be a representative of YouthBuild; 1 of whom shall be a representative of the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University; 1 of whom shall be a representative of the Massachusetts AFL/CIO; 1 of whom shall be a representative selected from a list of 3 nominees proposed jointly by the Massachusetts Dropout Prevention Commission; and 3 of whom shall be experienced in successful youth workforce program efforts including, without limitation: public schools, the nonprofit sector, law enforcement or municipally-administered after-school and recreation programs.

SECTION 2. The Youth Solutions Commission will be responsible for reviewing existing program strategies in youth employment, education pathways and efforts to reduce violence and dropout rates in an integrated, coordinated and cost-effective manner. The commission will propose adoption of policies, laws, regulations and/or other actions necessary to establish an effective, youth workforce and education system in the Commonwealth through specific strategies, agency and community coordination and collaboration and consistent investments. The commission should seek to achieve the maximum level of coordination and co-investment in each of the agencies named herein: private sector employers, and philanthropic organizations in Massachusetts including a review of proven investment strategies including school-to-career connecting activities, youth-at-risk programs for a year-round employment program for youth in all workforce regions and grants for community safety initiatives.

SECTION 3. The commission shall examine and make recommendations on: (1) better coordination between dropout prevention/recovery, alternative education, youth safety initiatives, postsecondary education opportunities and summer and year-round youth employment programs; (2) linking violence prevention programs with productive and enriching education and employment programs; (3) youth transitions from summer employment to year-round employment or an internship programs; (4) youth employment programs that have had consistent success in increasing high school graduation rates for at-risk youth; (5) improved connections between high schools and postsecondary education programs in high-demand sector

50 areas to be updated at least once in a twelve month period; and community colleges to four year  
51 institutions through articulation agreements; (6) linkages between public-private organizations  
52 and private employers so ensure youth have access to private sector jobs; (7) an apprenticeship  
53 system with private sector employers including on-the-job training and employer tax incentives  
54 or wage subsidies; (8) implementing the recommendations of the Massachusetts Graduation and  
55 Dropout Prevention and Recovery Commission in *Making the Connection*, and the best practices  
56 from *Project Reconnect* as a model to re-engage youth; (9) reviewing existing alternative  
57 education program options, assessing the need for additional program approaches and making  
58 recommendations to increase capacity for innovative programming to meet the needs of  
59 disconnected youth; (10) examining policy to encourage after-school and out-of-school  
60 programs to connect youth with community-based experiences outside of an educational setting;  
61 (11) track the long-term effects of all youth employment and education programs through wage  
62 record matching and graduation rate reporting

63 SECTION 4. The commission shall conduct its first meeting not less than 90 days after the  
64 effective date of this act and shall conduct not less than 3 public hearings in geographically  
65 diverse regions of the Commonwealth. The commission shall submit a report of its findings and  
66 recommendations together with legislation, if any, to the clerks of the house of representatives  
67 and the senate who shall forward the same to the house and senate chairs of the joint committee  
68 on education and the chairs of the house and senate committees on ways and means not later than  
69 May 15, 2011.